

Cascabel Clayworks  
5360 N Teran Road  
Benson, Arizona 85602

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Thomas Chenal, Chairman  
Arizona Power Plant and Line Siting Committee  
Arizona Corporation Commission  
1200 West Washington Street  
Phoenix Arizona 85007

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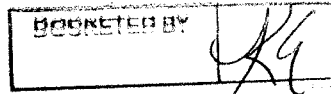
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AZ CORP COMMISSION  
DOCKET CONTROL

October 14, 2015



RE: SunZia transmission, LLC application for Certificate of Environmental Compatibility  
Docket Number L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Chairman Chenal and Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the SunZia application before the Committee and the Commissioners. I do not believe this project will benefit the people of Arizona, and will briefly explain why I hold this opinion in the hope that the Committee members are listening to perspectives from the voice of a rural Arizonan citizen.

I have lived in Cascabel, Arizona for 45 years. I moved here to operate a cottage industry making pottery and a farmstead to produce food, which I continue to do. I have been a cooperator in the Redington Natural Resource Conservation District for 38 years, and served for over 20 of those years as a board supervisor. I have also worked from my home for The Nature Conservancy for the past 16 years. I currently serve on the board of directors for the Cascabel Community Center, and am a member of several other community organizations. This letter and the opinions expressed are my own and are based on an appreciation for the San Pedro Valley gained while raising a family, running a business, being an active community member, and watching how the river flows and what lives around it.

My comments pertain specifically to the area between Willcox and Oracle, AZ, and especially to the eastern flank of the Rincon-Catalina mountain ranges, the western boundary of the middle San Pedro River watershed.

This region is still largely unfragmented, part of one of the two largest left in the state. It has the highest biodiversity of animal species in our nation. It has several ecotones of varying plant communities that support this unique species diversity and abundance. It has been used since the 1980's as a mitigation site for ecological damages done in other parts of the state to support development in the Sun Corridor; millions of dollars and thousands of acres of conservation lands will be diminished in value and function by the long-term consequences of building this project here.

As responsible Arizonans, we need to look at the long term viability of our state's resources. This valley represents a place where ecologic functioning should be taken care of, not sacrificed to a transmission corridor of questionable need and predictable future negative consequences. The economic values inherent in keeping this valley at work as a wildlife corridor and a source of clean water recharge far outweigh the value of creating yet another corridor for inappropriate development.

Planning for future energy sources to support the wise placement of urban development is integral for Arizona's future. There are more appropriate sites for solar, wind, and natural gas development closer to existing and expanding urban load centers. We must take responsible steps to conserve the remaining watersheds and areas which act as places for our native flora and fauna to thrive, since we depend on those ecologically functioning systems to provide services that support everything from surface and groundwater levels to the open land vistas so unique to our state.

The San Pedro Valley is an Arizona asset, deserving of respect and protection by her citizens, for their long-term benefit. It is a place in our great state that should not be sacrificed by the distant halls of Washington DC which "fast-tracked" the SunZia project based on the questionable premise that it would bring renewable energy from New Mexico to California.

Many opponents of the SunZia proposal submitted comprehensive comments during the NEPA process. State and federal agencies, some as cooperating agencies, detailed the impacts to the valley's natural and cultural resources at great length. Conservation non-profit groups presented evidence during the federal process. Fort Huachuca objected to the impacts it would have on their electronic testing area. I hope you all have had opportunity to review at least some of those well-documented and detailed points of concern submitted during the federal Environmental Impact Statement process. I understand that more comments are being brought to you now as you research the impacts this new transmission corridor will have on the landscape, and weigh the benefits to the state.

The BLM chose to issue a decision that the western San Pedro Valley route was the "best" alignment for the proposed project. The pressure of "fast tracking" to fulfill quotas for renewable energy set at the federal administration level has negative impacts on the local landscape that are not appreciated from distant desks. It is my sincere hope that officials and decision-makers at the state agencies and offices will better understand that the SunZia project will only detract from our state's assets and that there are better choices to secure future energy needs.

Your's is an awesome responsibility: long-term planning for a sustainable future. Thank you again for the opportunity to write to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Clark". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Barbara Clark